MODERN TIMES

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Bpt. Motel Workers Vote the Union Inn !

by Modern Times Staff

A major victory was scored by Bridgeport Holiday Inn Workers Friday, March 1, when they voted overwhelmingly for unionization.

In a government run National Labor Relations Board election the Inn employees voted 93 to 33 to have Local 217 Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders International Union as their represtatives.

The voting took place from 8:00 in the morning to 8:30 at night at the Bridgeport Holiday Inn with 127 of the 136 eligible voters casting ballots. When the polls closed, employees, union staff and management personnel jammed into the balloting area while Mr. Banks, the government agent, quickly segregated the yes and no ballots for the final tally. With little more than half the ballots counted the victory was assured.

"We did it – we won", "I can't believe we won by so much," and "It's great so many people supported the Union" were heard over and over as excitement and congratulations rapidly spread through the Inn, with celebrations continuing far into the night.

Frank Annunziato, business agent of Local 217, had major responsibility for the drive. He was jubilant over the results, saying, "This is a tremendous victory for the Holiday Inn workers and one of the most important victories for our local union in recent history."

Local 217 is currently in the midst of a major organizing drive throughout the state of Connecticut. This Holiday Inn was one of many targets. At present there are only three organized Holiday Inns in all of New England.

Victory Result of Long Effort

The vote culminated a twelve-month drive which started in February, 1973 when some employees contacted the union in their search for better benefits and working conditions.

At that time the Bridgeport Holiday Inn, one of the largest hotels in the state, was owned by the Stengol Corporation. The wages and benefits for both the housekeeping and the food and beverage workers were very poor. In addition, as is common in non-union hotels, there was no seniority system, grievance procedure, or job security.

During the many months of the drive, the union staff made home visits to all the workers, sent informational letters, and called many meetings to discuss unionization. As the drive gained momentum in the fall of 1973, an organizing committee of employees was formed. By January the union demanded recognition as the bargaining agent for all the non-supervisory employees at the Inn.

The situation was complicated by the intended sale of the Inn to Payne Corporation, the same corporation which owns the Norwalk Holiday Inn. The Norwalk Holiday Inn has been a union house since 1972 when the employees there voted to join this same Union.

Strike Avoided

A near-strike for union recognition was averted in late January when both the Stengol and Payne Corporations, in a meeting with the union and Mr. Banks of the government, agreed to March 1 as the date for an NLRB representational election.

See **214**, *page 2*

Cathy Quinn

Before the victorious voting in of union representation by Bridgeport Holiday Inn workers, Local 217 held a banquet for the entire group. "Togetherness" was the keynote, and obviously led to the best possible results. The contract still has to be negotiated.

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Every Able Worker Should Be Entitled To A Job

AIM Proposal #5

End City & State Hiring Freezes

Control Job Training Programs

Adequate Unemployment and Welfare Benefits

Dorothea Lange

Employment and Welfare

The most wasted natural resource in this country is idle labor. All the unemployed workers in the United States since World War II could have totally rebuilt all of our cities – not to mention all of the essential goods and services that could have been produced.

The problem is that most employment in this country is in private hands – controlled by private corporations. Private business, for the most part, determines who and how many workers are employed. In addition, these corporations buy our labor not necessarily to produce what is useful or needed, but what is profitable.

In order to make money, private business seeks to hire the fewest possible workers at the lowest possible wages. The system that allows private business to control our economy also allows millions of American workers to be unemployed.

The American Independent Movement (AIM) believes that everyone has a right to a job at a useful and needed occupation. There is more than enough to do in this country to produce all the goods and services we require. Also, the decisions over what to do with our labor should be public – not private decisions: should we make 50 different kinds of deodorants or rid our air of pollution; should we produce hundreds of different model cars or improve our mass transit system; should we make 40 different kinds of detergents and 55 different kinds of breakfast cereals or have free health care . . . These decisions should be made by American workers and not American owners.

On the local level, there is very little we can do to significantly improve the employment situation. Over time, it will take a national struggle of American working people to gain control of employment.

Right now, city funds are tight and federal and state employment programs skimpy. We *can*, however, make sure that the hiring practices of our local and state governments are fair and that available jobs go first to the most needy.

End City and State Hiring Freezes – Over the past few years, both Meskill and Guida have frozen most hiring in state and city government. This means that vacancies in education, highway, maintenance, and sanitation, health and other public services go unfilled when someone retires or transfers to another job. This practice helps aggravate the already high unemployment rolls and reduces the quantity and quality of public services. Meskill's surpluses have kept Connecticut workers unemployed while lowering standards in education, transportation and health services. Reforms in our tax structure (See AIM Proposal no. 4, Feb. 15 *Modern Times)* could provide ample funds to end these freezes and expand public services in existing areas.

Control Job Training Programs – The City receives several million dollars from the state and federal governments for job training programs.

Employment for the Neediest

City manpower director, Everit Shaw controls these funds and doesn't seem to answer to anyone – at least not to the public or the Board of Aldermen. Shaw got

See **Unemployment** *page 2*

Money Talks

Don't Mourn, Organize!

by Rick Wolff
Modern Times Staff

Since about 3 out of 4 American workers are not members of any union or of any employee association that acts like a union, what are the unions thinking and doing about the unorganized majority? Union thinking, as expressed in many ways over the years, is simple and direct: the existence of unorganized workers is not only bad for them (poorer working conditions, less job security, less dignity on the job), it is also a constant threat to the organized workers.

Employers always can and usually will try to get rid of unionized workers and replace them with the unorganized as a way to squeeze out more profits. If there were no unorganized workers, if all workers were united in the demand for union wages and union conditions, the employers could never play one group (organized) off against the other (unorganized), and all workers would benefit.

So much for the thinking. What are unions doing, what can they do?

The Facts

The job is clear in every state of the Union. Using 1970 statistics, the best-organized state is West Virginia, where 47% of all workers (exculding farm workers) are organized. Connecticut, by comparison, ranks number 27 with only 25% of non-agricultural workers organized into unions or union-type employee associations. Just in case you are interested, North Carolina ranks number 50, with 9% of workers in unions.

Most unions report that their business agents whether paid or unpaid, spend most of their time either negotiating contracts for their members or making sure the employers abide by the contracts they signed. Looking at the whole country for 1970, some 185 unions organized into about 77,000 locals had to work on 153,000 collective bargaining agreements in force in 1970. This averages out to about 2 contracts for each local to work out and watch over, although many locals have far more than 2.

This means that most local union officials simply lack the time to undertake the hard, time-consuming work of organizing: explaining to workers what a union can bring, how to go about organizing one, how to prevent the boss from threatening or firing workers for unionizing efforts, etc. And most union locals cannot afford the wages of a paid, full-time organizer.

Organizers

Sometimes, full-time paid organizers are hired at the national headquarters of the union (usually in Washington) for work in one or several parts of the country. In 1970, somewhere between 5,500 and 6,000 people were "organizers and representatives" on the payrolls of the unions. If we guess--and it would be a generous guess--that about 3,000 of these people really worked on organizing the unorganized, then we could draw the following conclusions about union organizing in the U.S. these days.

1. Since, at the very least, some 45 million American workers could be organized by the 3,000 organizers, that works out to 15,000 workers per organizer.

2. From 1960 to 1970, union membership rose by 2.4 million workers to 19.4 million. So, 3,000 organizers working 10 years brought in 2.4 million newly organized unionists, which works out to 80 workers organized per year by each organizer on the average.

3. By comparing the unmbers in 1. and 2. above, we can begin to understand the scope and size of the project called "organizing the unorganized."

Statistics used in this article come from Bulletin No. 1750, "Directory of National Unions and Employee Associations, 1971," published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., 1972.

Detergents Can Get Under Your Skin

by Conn. Occupational Health and Safety Group

People who clean floors, wash dishes, manufacture soaps or do other jobs which expose them to detergents for long periods of time may develop severe reactions to the substances which compose the detergents.

Generally, exposure to detergents may cause any of several forms of *dermatitis,* or skin irritation, which may be characterized by redness, itching or swelling. Dermatitis caused by a substance at work will look like any other skin irritation but it will always begin shortly after contact with the irritating substance. It will usually disappear when contact ends, although it may persist from day to day, and may not disappear over a weekend away from work. Usually, a skin irritation caused by a detergent will not spread to other parts of the body, and it will tend to affect most of the workers exposed to it.

Dissolve Skin

Detergents can cause three types of harmful effects on the body. First, some detergents tend to dissolve not only the outer oily layer of skin, but also the inner protective layer. Ordinarily, this layer prevents the evaporation of water from the body. Therefore, when it is dissolved, the body tends to get dehydrated. This also makes the skin more susceptive and sensitive to other irritants.

Secondly, some detergents contain substances which are **primary irritants**, and cause dermatitis to any person who comes in contact with them. Such substances include hexachlorophene, bithionol and halogenated salicylanilides. The body's natural defenses against these substances — the outer acid layer on the skin, a thickening of the protective layer and sweating — all reduced by other characteristics of the detergents.

The symptoms of contact dermatitis are progressive. Redness and swelling may turn to water blisters which are often open. Oozing and crusting may result. Finally, the skin may become thick and scaly, and crossed with deep cracks. Substances which otherwise would not be able to penetrate the skin can enter the body through these cracks thereby causing infection.

Thirdly, some detergents contain **sensitizers,** substances which cause dermatitis only in people with an allergy to the substance, or only after prolonged contact. Like primary irritants, they may cause **eczema**, or dermatitis accompanied by itching and a fluid discharge, blister-like eruptions and chronic abscesses.

Detergents which contain enzymes have additional harmful effects. Workers in enzyme-detergent factories often suffer respiratory irritation from breathing large amounts of the enzyme dust. Symptoms include breathlessness, "tightness" in the chest, wheezing, and coughing.

A small number of consumers develop similar symptoms simply from using enzyme detergents. Enzyme detergents constitute a potentially serious hazard, particularly for people who already suffer from eczema or asthma, or have generally sensitive skin.

Enzymes Pointless As Well

Moreover, since it is difficult to determine whether enzyme detergents actually help in getting laundry cleaner, as manufacturers often claim, there seems to be no reason to use them. Detergent manufacturers rarely indicate on detergent packages whether they contain enzymes, but any detergent used as a pre-soak, or which requires the addition of bleach five minutes after starting the wash, is likely to contain enzymes and should be treated with caution.

What to Do

There are several things which workers constantly exposed to detergents can do to protect themselves and improve their workplace. Unfortunately, in line with its generally deficient coverage of dangerour substances, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration has not set general standards for the use of detergents.

In the absence of a national standard, there are many other courses of action that workers can take to protect themselves. For partial protection, workers often use personal protective equipment such as work gloves and protective creams.

However, effective long-term protection depends on institutionalizing engineering changes so that workers will be more systematically protected. Such changes include: 1) using less toxic detergents; 2) enclosure or isolation of the process which uses detergents; 3) improved ventilation; 4) shielding of sprays and splashes; 5) the replacement of hand operations with mechanical dispensers and mixers; and 6) changes in work patterns to minimize contact with hazardous detergents.

Ellen Gesmer

The Connecticut Occupational Safety and Health Project is presenting a course on health and safety in the workplace. The course is sponsored by the New Haven Area Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO. Remaining sessions will be held on March 26 and April 9 at 7:30 p.m. at 285 Prospect Street. Anyone interested in job safety and what to do about it is urged to attend.

Unemployment

continued from page 1

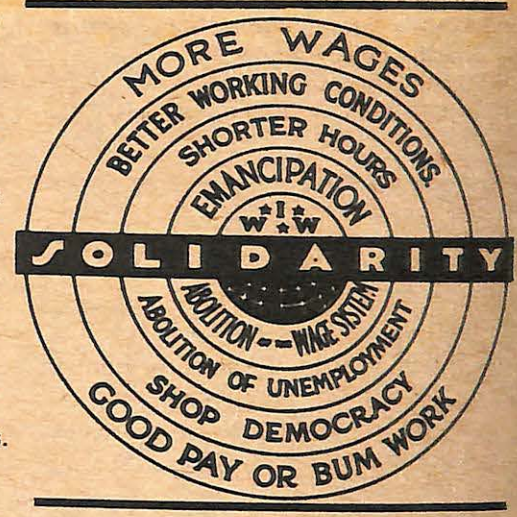
his job as a political appointment. There should be a public commission consisting of representatives of organized labor, community and welfare groups to make sure that these jobs go first to the most needy — the unemployed.

Adequate unemployment and Welfare Benefits — A successful employment program will reduce but not eliminate unemployment. AIM believes that every person who can work, should work if a job is available. Unfortunately, many people cannot work for a living. Most of these are older people, the very young, the handicapped, and those who must work taking care of their children. If we punish these people with inadequate public benefits, we will also be hurting ourselves. Substandard benefits that maintain families in desperate conditions can increase job insecurity, in wage cutting and can cause increased crime.

Desperation can lead people to accept jobs at substandard wages and working conditions. If one is forced to work for less, it lowers the wages for everyone. Desperate financial conditions also increase the possibilities for crime, illness and drug addiction.

We must demand adequate welfare and unemployment subsidies for our common good. These subsidies should be linked to a cost of living adjustment as should all wages. The present flat grant welfare in Conn. is clearly inadequate to meet people's needs.

Besides working for the long range goal of full and useful employment for all American workers, AIM will work with community and labor groups and other interested citizens to bring about the local changes we have recommended.



217

continued from page 1

The final few weeks before election time saw the management trying to "dissuade" the workers of their need for a union, with promises of a better life to come under the new management.

Jack Sturm, the innkeeper for the new owners, scored the balloting results as "a direct reflection on the previous management and the dissension they created".

The organizers for the union feel Sturm didn't learn much from the union win in Norwalk, where he also was the innkeeper. They feel the victory was due to the hard work of the employees and the union staff, as well as the real desire for union benefits and conditions.

Members of the organizing committee were: Kitchen — Rocco Depalma, John Paul Jones; waiters and waitresses — Frank Von Oy, Daniel Saltman; busboys — Rodney Michaud; cocktail waitresses — Joan Corarito; bartenders — Edward Rosario; cashiers — Dorothea Honiker; room service — Albert Quick; front desk — Pat and Bernice Donovan; banquet — Paul Bourdeau, Catherine Ryan; housekeeping — Eleanor Clark, Darlene Smith; maintainance — Jack Sniffen. The union staff was Frank Annunziato, Karl Lechow and Morty Miller.

The union hopes to have a contract by this summer.

Book Review Labor Harmony Hits Wrong Note

by Mike F. Holodnak

The American Labor Movement by Mark Starr (Oxford Spectrum Series)

Having been a worker all my life, banging my head up against the debilitating "Labor-Management Harmony" policy which is the major cause of organized labor being sold down the river, along comes a book that does a very professional public relations job for Labor-Management harmony.

Mark Starr, the author, after outlining the trials and tribulations that workers had been forced to endure in their earlier struggles for union recognition, states, "History suggests strongly that the only sound basis for peaceful industrial relations in the United States is genuine harmonious cooperation between management and labor, meeting as equals to discuss problems of vital concern to both."

He further elaborates, "Unions have assisted in planning for greater efficiency because there is now some reason to hope that workers will be able to share in the benefits of increased productivity."

The entire theme of the book is an attempt to show that if workers and corporations worked harmoniously as partners, we could usher in a new ere of peace, prosperity and happiness.

Now, I'm not against peace, prosperity and happiness. In fact it's because I strongly believe in these ideals that I take a strong stand against having harmonious relations with this country's greatest purveyors of oppression, injustice and violence, the giant corporations.

Crimes of Big Business

On the question of which is more sacred to a corporation, human life or profits, most people by now know the answer. 18,000 American workers are killed and 2.2 million are seriously injured every year.

The foreign policy, like the Vietnam war, is determined not by the American people but by the big corporations, not in the interest of national security but for the sole interest of corporate greed.

Also, in the marketplace, we, the workers and consumers, get shoddy products at exorbitant prices foisted on us by the monopolies who dictate quality (built-in obsolescence) and prices.

Having harmonious relations with corporations which have this kind of track record will in no way bring us "peaceful transition."

Some Labor Leaders Sell Out

George Meany has harmonious relations with the National Association of Manufacturers and was a strong supporter of the Vietnam war.

Fitzsimmons has harmonious relations with not only giant corporations and Los Vegas gamblers, but also with Tricky Dicky. This, of course, led him into efforts to try to destroy the United Farm Workers Union.

Tony Boyle had harmonious relations with the mine owners at the expense of thousands of miners' lives in unsafe mines.

Others Stick to their Guns

In sharp contrast, Arnold Miller, the newly elected U.M.W. President, is bringing democracy back into the union and has made it clear that he will not have harmonious relations with the mine companies and will demand mine safety and decent wages whether the mine companies like it or not.

Mark Starr also tries to show graphically how unions have grown. But what is painfully clear is that, from the all time high of 23.7% in 1952, unions had shrunk to 22.6% in 1970. The 1950's was the disgraceful red-baiting period when corporations cleaned out the more dedicated unionists with the full cooperation of some of the current union leaders who had helped to get the labor-management harmony policy firmly established.

Mark Starr also states: "When union officers, in exceptional instances take too much power. . .it means that Joe and his fellow workers have not used their rights of control. They have 'fallen asleep at the switch,'.."

In my opinion, it's not so much falling asleep at the switch as it is resolving the same old plant grievances over and over again to the point of frustration and exhaustion.

Education for What?

On workers education, Mark Starr, states: "In some countries, workers' education was for many years a weapon in the class struggle of ideas. It is now becoming in the United States and elsewhere, a method of intelligent communication with management...an attempt to recognize the common interests of both groups. Conflict is replaced by cooperation."

Here, he is correct. The educational process has always been under the influence of big business. It has taught many generations of school children how much they had in common with big biz while subtly implying that unions were evil. Big biz, through education, is setting the moral tone in this country. Today, the selling of moral principles to the highest bidder, is a normal way of life.

Also, Mark Starr says, "Organized labor can be a potent force for the speedy and successful defense of democratic freedoms, and for the establishment of a more just and humane social order for all mankind."

Here I heartily agree. But it cannot be done by having harmonious relations with big biz which is the main stumbling block toward *the achievement of these goals.*

Mark Starr deals with reality when he covers labor history which he has obviously researched with diligence. But, when he deals with labor today out goes reality and in comes fantasy.

In short, this book is one of the greatest disservices to the labor movement I've read in a long time.

Teamster President Frank Fitzsimmons addressing the 1972 convention of the American Farm Bureau, a multi-billion dollar lobbying organization which works in the behalf of the interests of the nation's corporate farm complexes. It's this kind of cozy relationship between labor and management which spells doom for the rights of workers, as the Teamsters' attempts to destroy the United Farm Workers Union demonstrate.

Farah Workers Still Need Our Help

To the Editors:

You have probably already heard of the successful settlement of the 21 month long Farah strike.

The great sacrifices these workers made for their beliefs in human dignity have brought them to this time of tremendous gratification. For long months these workers have lived on $30 a week strike benefits.

They need immediate help.

We are therefore continuing the Mission Justice campaign, to get food, clothing and dollars to the Farah workers in time for an Easter Season—Strike Victory Celebration.

Here is a list of items needed:

New Clothing (Children's, Women's & Men's)
Toys, Games & Sporting Goods
Food (Canned, Dried or Powdered)
Housecleaning Items & Paper Goods

For further information call the New Haven drop-off station at 755-0859, address: Conn. State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, 9 Washington Ave., Hamden, Conn.

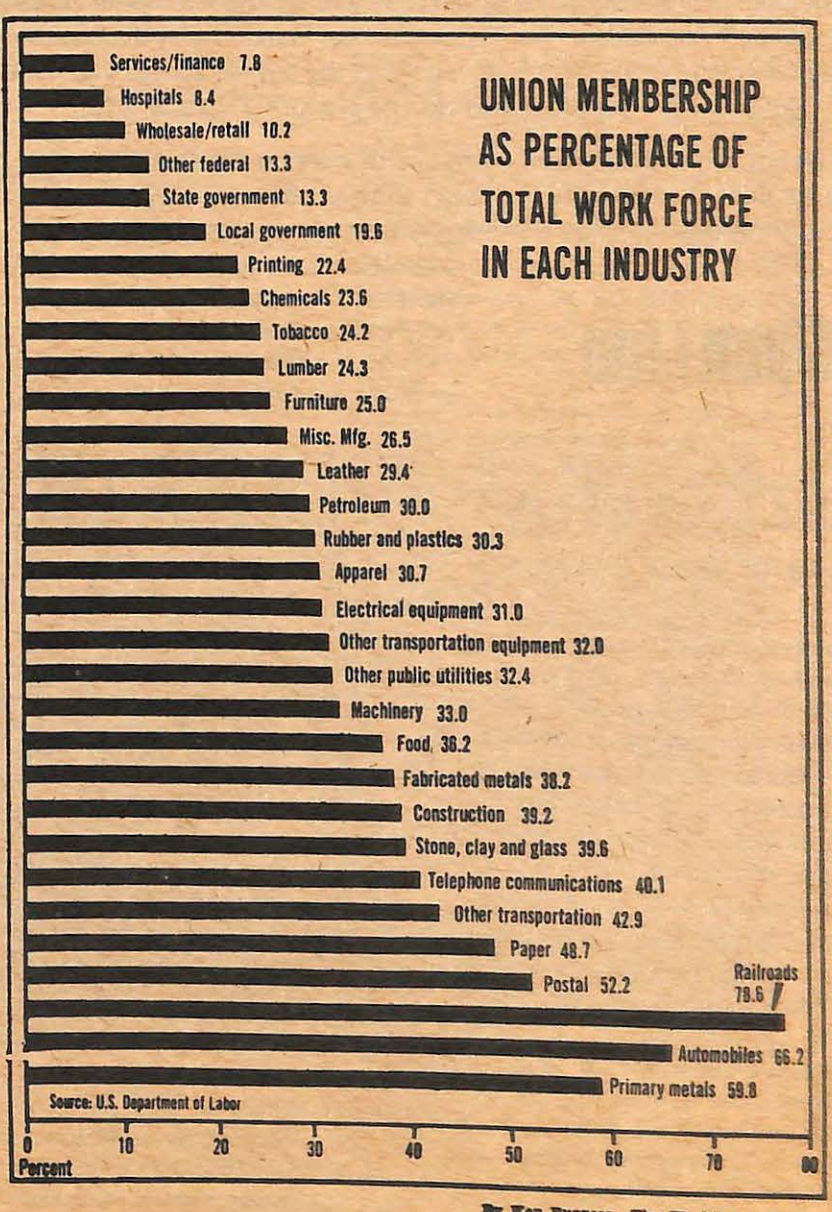
Sincerely Yours,
Nicholas D'Andrea
Amalgamated Clothing Workers

Machinists Officials Installed

courtesy of Victory Lodge No. 609

Elected officials of the newly-formed District 170 of the International Association of Machinist and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO are shown during installation ceremony held February 28, 1974. Shown from left to right are: Russell Bassett, Warren Canfield, Louis Ursini, Ted Turek, and Mike Rao.

Last week we inadvertently omitted this chart from the **Money Talks** *column. We are including it in this issue because we feel that it stands on its own merits.*



By Ken Burgess—The Washington Post

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MODERN TIMES welcomes all comments and letters to the editors.

MODERN TIMES

Editorial Office: 441 Chapel Street
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MODERN TIMES is published by the American Independent Movement (AIM) as its political organ. Work on MODERN TIMES is done by volunteers, both members and non-members of AIM. The political views of AIM are given in the editorial. We encourage contributions from the New Haven community in the form of articles and letters.

MODERN TIMES is a paper to tell the story of and by the people of New Haven. We don't get this kind of news from profit-making commercial papers. There is no place else in New Haven where the problems of working men and women are told by them instead of their bosses. There is no place else where the problems of employment and education, and housing and health care are told by the people who have to live with them.

This is the richest country in the world. Yet most of the wealth is used only by a few. We must all work together to claim the wealth we all helped to create. There would be no need to strike for paltry raises, waste our resources and labor on missiles and bombs, or waste the lives of our young men in wars like Vietnam. We would produce what we need, not what is profitable.

The American Independent Movement has been working since 1966 to get people together against the vested interests that run New Haven and the whole country. We want everyone to have good housing, good education, child care centers, recreation areas, decent health care, and decent jobs.

STAFF: David Adams, Gary Benenson, Matt Borenstein, Ed Brueler, Ellen Comisso, Vittorio Comisso, Lillian Dimow, Joelle Dominski, Andy Esposito, John Flannelly, Sam Goodwin, Stanley Heller, Liz Henderson, Nick Heyer, Eileen Hoffman, Lynne Karsten, Karl Lechow, Alice Mick, Steve Mick, Ray Milici, Patti Miller, Laurie Nussdorfer, Renee Poirier, Peter O'Connell, Naomi Resnick, Ruth Resnick, Pat Sandacata, Bob Sherry, Dave Spinner, Ken Stokes, Henry Tamarin, Richard Winfield, Karen Wolff, Rick Wolff, Lea Nordlicht.

Editorial
Unemployment Is Illegal

The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the US Department of Labor has just released the latest figures on unemployment: it is up over 5% and rising fast. So once again millions of American families see their worst fears come true. It is hard times again, down to the unemployment office and over to the food stamp window — a bad, bad scene.

Strange as it may seem, strictly speaking, unemployment is against the law in this country whether it swings up or down. The law in question is the Employment Act of 1946, passed overwhelmingly by the US Congress. That law obligates the US Government to do everything in its power to "create maximum employment." In 1946, the groundswell of pressure on Congress from unions, socialist groups and workers generally was strong enough to get that Act passed and to get Congress to commit itself to two ways of keeping employment "at the maximum." One way was to have the US government build a massive network of highways crisscrossing the country. The other way was to have the US government build a massive quantity of low-cost, good-quality housing for the people. Both ways, everyone knew, would serve to create millions of jobs doing useful work and thereby obeying the Employment Act's provision about "maximum employment."

The facts since 1946 speak loudly and dramatically. In every year since, there have been *millions* of Americans unemployed; in many years it was *many* millions. The highways were built because the auto companies knew that more roads meant a greater demand for cars. The housing program never got far off the ground, because the big real estate owners and landlords — especially in the cities — knew that they could never get away with high rents if their tenants could choose to move to low-cost, good-quality public housing instead.

In plain English, the Government has violated the law in failing to maintain "maximum" employment. The Government's only excuse has been that it did not want to do anything to hurt company profits.

Yet there are many things the Government could do to obey the law. Low-cost public housing is still a crying need; the trains and buses need to be repaired and constructed for the mass public transportation systems we so badly need; if the giant corporations in the fuel and food businesses refuse to provide their products in adequate supply at reasonable prices, the Government can drill wells, mine coal, clear land, raise crops and livestock. This brief list of what Government could do to create "maximum" employment is also a list of what the Government has failed to do in violation of law and in violation of the needs of the people it is supposed to represent — and the only excuse is that the Government does not want to hurt the profits of some big companies.

The Nature of the Open Line Column

Open Line, a regular column of *Modern Times,* is designed to give readers and contributors an opportunity to air their personal views on current political issues. The Open Line on March 1 was mistakenly signed *Modern Times Staff.* It reflected the author's ideas and in no way expressed the editorial position of *Modern Times* or AIM.

We welcome other ideas from our readers on the same subject, and we publish the following Open Line as one opposing opinion.

Open Line

The Open Line column is not a statement of the position of **Modern Times.** *It is a reflection of the individual opinions of our readers. We welcome reader participation and response in this column.*

Solzhenitsyn: Another View

by Peter J. O'Connell

The issues raised by the Solzhenitsyn affair are of great importance and complexity. They must be confronted in an atmosphere free of media-induced hysteria. Unfortunately, the article "The Solzhenitsyn Affair" in the Open Line column of the March 1 *Modern Times* was developed in such an abstract, absolutist fashion as to constitute a kind of intellectual assault on the issues rather than a confrontation of them.

The article's first statement "Alexander Solzhenitsyn is a brave man" is accurately based upon the evidence of the man's life. It's sweeping, second statement "The Soviet system is corrupt," which appears in another form ("There ain't [sic] no mercy in the Soviet Union...") in the article's conclusion, is irresponsible both in terms of history and logic; it cannot reasonably be deduced from any of the material dealt with in the course of the article. In order to confront the issues in this case questions have to be asked rather than judgments passed.

One such question involves the issue of free expression. Clearly, people must have the right to be free to speak and write (with the usual "fire in theatre" principle, etc.) their thoughts without fear of repression by the state. Does it therefore follow, however, that this right entails an *obligation* on others to listen to, print, or read what is said or written regardless of what it is? For example, William Shockley should be free to develop his ideas about the genetic inferiority of darkskinned people. Correspondingly, students at Yale, or the public in general, should also be free *not* to listen to his vicious nonsense from a public podium. And, if they are socially responsible, they will, in fact, boycott and refute speeches by him. Are Soviet publishers required to print anything and everything written by Alexander Solzhenitsyn?

The Gulag Archipelago

This question can only be answered when the question of what Solzhenitsyn has actually written is answered. It should be borne in mind that the full text of his book *The Gulag Archipelago: 1918-1956* has not yet been published in a Western language. Only three, seemingly somewhat garbled, excerpts have been published. Yet the book as a whole has been glorified in the media as a great factual revelation indicting the Soviet system of socialism.

The excerpts thus far published do not support such a conclusion. Whatever the book is as literature, it is certainly not history--at least historical work of Solzhenitsyn's doing. It is a melange of: his personal experiences; historical facts already well-publicized in the Soviet Union; his personal opinions presented as fact; unsubstantiated speculation; flights of fancy; and second- and third-hand accounts given him by various acquaintances, some on the level of rumor, gossip and hearsay. The point of course is not that all of what Solzhenitsyn writes is necessarily wrong but that we have no real way of knowing whether much of what he writes is right or wrong. Before an entire system is indicted, evidence proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt should be presented. What is the quality of Solzhenitsyn's evidence? Let us consider some examples.

Lenin, Stalin, Vlasov

He sees Leninism as the source of the crimes of Stalinism because Lenin, in the midst of war and famine, harshly criticized malingering telegraph and railway workers and had gold speculators arrested. Is Solzhenitsyn's position reasonable? *Or is it an absurdity in view of the fact* that any leader of any kind would have taken such obviously necessary measures in such a desperate situation?

Solzhenitsyn also contends that Stalinism was worse than Czarism or Nazism. As Harrison Salisbury of *The New York Times* commented: "...Mr. Solzhenitsyn suggests that the Nazis were relatively benign by comparison." Solzhenitsyn is quite taken by the idea that the fact that some Soviet citizens, notably

See **Solzhenitsyn,** *page 8*

Herblock, Washington Post

"Our dollars are buying more—the country is in great shape—he's innocent—and this is a lovely steak dinner!"

The Day the Earth Stood Still, Or America Bites Off More Than It Can Chew

They came in waves, thousands of them, permeating the air with the stench of garbage, dropping millions of tons of it upon the cities of Southern California, stretching their way across the Great Plains, to Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, strewing throughout the vast territory of the United States payload after payload of old grapefruit rinds, egg shells, coffee grounds, beer cans, soda bottles, aluminum foil, paper cups, paper plates, paper napkins, paper cartons, plastic forks, plastic containers, plastic bags, plastic wrappings, plastic everything—B'52's, F-111's, F-4's, A-6's, A-7's, coming fron an unknown land, engaged in a mission of unknown objectives.

In a fit of coughing, the absolutely last American eagle groped through the stalled traffic of Phoenix, made its way to the desert lands of Arizona, and began singing: "This land is your land, this land is my land, this land was made for you and me!"

Henry stormed into the Oval Room of the White House, livid with rage, waving a German Luger:

"It's freezing in here!"

"What's on your mind, Henry?"

"Tricky, we're in a pickle!"

"I will not resign, I will not resign come hell or high water!"

" Damn it, Tricky, this is it--the jig is up!"

"Now, Henry, you know perfectly well that I have a mandate to love and honor the office of the presidency, given to me by God!"

"But we have to do something!"

"Schedule a trip to Afghanistan!"

The invaders conquered, choking out the lifeblood of the nation with refuse. The people, like Nero, appalled, frenzied, bewildered, were driven to feed on the trash heap , and soon became sick. The interrogations began:

" I see that you carry one of those cards!"

"You mean the credit card."

"Yes, is it only people of a privileged status that have such cards?"

"Well, yes, I suppose so."

"And what is their purpose?"

"They allow you to live a little bit better than those who do not have them."

"I see, and how are they acquired?"

"They are acquired at birth, a computer chooses a select number of people to receive them--that's democracy!"

"Do you know how the computer is programmed?"

"No, I never thought about that, I think it's a state secret."

"And what of those who do not have them, can they acquire them through special channels?"

"Only by bribery, which is perfectly legal in our society."

"You may go now! Oh, one other question, what do you do for recreation?"

"I visit gas stations."

"That will all change. You will no longer have to pay homage to Simon the Simple, only to us, the People of the White Tornado!"

But in time, their conquerors grew beneficent, they made them well. The earth absorbed the waste, and happy days were once again upon them.

—John Flannelly

Theater Troupe Presents Fun Play

by courtesy of the Storymimers

The Storymimers Theater Troupe, a new group in Connecticut that improvises material for the young and the not-so-young. In February, the group had them all laughing in Orange grade schools. In April, they'll return to Lee High School in the city to perform "The Mother Goose Review" - sponsored by South Central Community College. People are urged not to miss this one -- watch for the dates.

by The Storymimers Theater Troupe

The Storymimers, Connecticut's newest improvisational theater troupe are returning to the New Haven Area for a performance at the Peck Place School in Orange. On February 27, the troupe, formerly affiliated with the University of Connecticut and now an independent company sponsored by Imagination Incorporated of Putnam, Connecticut, performed Mister Toad for K-6 grades.

Billed as "a merry musical Tale" the story is based on the adventures of Mr. Toad from Kenneth Graham's *The Wind in the Willows*, concentrating on the various hobbies that Toad tries, usually with disastrous results.

Featured in the cast are Bari Willerford, a former resident of New Haven who delights the audience with his portrayal of Toad and Billy Collins, formerly of West Haven, who plays the worrisome but kind Ratty. The rest of the cast are all former students from the University of Connecticut in Storrs where the Storymimers were originated by their director, Dan Ater who was a professor in costume design and history as well as Children's Theater.

For All Ages

The Storymimers are bringing their theater to children all over the New England areas with tremendous success. Their uniqueness lies in their style of humor which can span the so-called generation gap with ease. They have found their best audiences to be those with mixed age groups. In one recent performance, the Storymimers performed for an audience consisting of children from four to fourteen. A hard job indeed, but the Storymimers had the entire audience involved. "It seems as though there's someone laughing all the time," one Storymimer remarked.

The Storymimers will be returning to New Haven in April to perform *The Mother Goose Revue* at Lee High School for area grammar school children. This show will be sponsored by South Central Community College.

Women's Day Celebrated

by Roberta Murphy
New Haven Women's Center

A weekend celebration of International Women's Day was held at the Center Church Parish House on March 8 and 9. This event was sponsored by the New Haven Women's Liberation Center in cooperation with many area women and organizations. The focus of this event was to draw attention to both the history of International Women's Day and the accomplishments of community women.

An audience of over 150 gathered for Friday evening's activities, which began with a reading commemorating past women's struggles. March 8 is the anniversary of two major women's strikes in the U.S. and one in Russia. In 1857 garment workers in New York City demanded shorter hours and decent working conditions. In 1908 these demands widened to include the vote and legislation to protect child laborers. On this day in 1917 women in St. Petersburg celebrated this American event during the revolution.

This reading was followed by performances by Ruth Meyer, playing dulcimer, Susan Delone demonstrating Tai Chi and a sword dance, a reading by the Women's Poetry Group and Julia Lebentritt, Joan Malone, a political dance, and "Women Make Music."

A Variety of Groups Participate

Saturday featured many exhibits and displays by individual artists and organizations, in general areas of women working, culture, and services. Among those represented were the National Organization of Women, the Women's Commission of the Sparticist League, Heavyset, and

see **Women's Day**, *page 8*

Cindy Green

International Women's Day was celebrated Friday night and Saturday, March 8 & 9. At the Center Church Parish House, various informal women's theater groups performed. They gave skits on a variety of themes, some humorous, such as photographed above.

Hill Gets Federal Food $

by Hill Health Center

The Hill Health Center (HHC) has received a $186,700 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to provide supplemental food to pregnant and lactating women, infants and young children in the Hill.

HHC is one of three agencies in the state selected for the program. The other two are in Bridgeport and Stamford. The State Department of Health is assisting.

The food consists of milk, infant's formula, cheese, eggs, infant and adult cereal and juice. The goal of the program is to combat undernourishment and its adverse effects.

HHC patients may purchase the food at participating neighborhood stores, using vouchers distributed by HHC.

The funds are provided until June 30 under a pilot Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC program.) HHC expects the grant to be continued after June 30 for a period of years.

Cornell Scott, HHC executive director, said that the WIC program will start operating sometime in February. The date will be announced. "You will be elibible to participate in WIC if you are registered at the Hill Health Center and have a low income or nutritional risk, are pregnant or lactating, or have children under four years of age," he said.

Any resident of the Hill neighborhood is eligible to register at the Health Center.

Evaluating Food Supplement

The Department of Agriculture plans to use the data generated by WIC programs across the country to evaluate the effects of providing special supplemental food to areas where diets are generally inadequate.

Dr. Paul Harris, HHC medical director, said, "The WIC program is badly needed in the Hill neighborhood. We see many cases of unhealthy infants because the mother was undernourished. The evidence indicates that infants born to severely malnourished mothers have permanent, irreversible reduction in the size of their brain and the number of brain cells."

He further stated, "Such infants have lower birth weights, are more inclined to immaturity, may have lower IQs and are more prone to infection.

"Malnourishment of pregnant women leads to 14 percent of them being anemic. The rate of nutritional anemia in the Hill is 12.5 percent; the rate of low birth weights is 10 percent; the rate of prematurity is 9 percent. The infant mortality rate in the Hill is 15 for every 1000 births; the rate of miscarriages 8 in 1,000 cases,"Dr Harris said.

Dr. David Perras, an HHC obstetrician-gynecologist, said that the average weight gain for pregnant women is between 24 and 26 pounds; however, many of his patients at the Health Center gain less due to poor diets.

Many Babies Born with Complications

He said, "Many of the babies born to *HHC patients are admitted to the Newborn* Special Care Unit of Yale-New Haven Hospital because of complications caused by undernourishment, prematurity and low-birth weight."

HHC has taken a survey of Center patients to determine which are the most popular food and drug stores in the area. The kinds of food will be printed on the voucher, which may be used only for that particular food. Vouchers will be issued monthly or in conjunction with pre-natal visits. Mr. Scott and Dr. Harris emphasized that the Health Center wants to take every precaution to insure that the extra food goes to the people who need it.

Participating stores may deposit the vouchers in the bank as if they were checks.

School Notes

Contract Maneuver Splits Board

by Ruth Hein

When, in 1973, the Board of Education gave George Barbarito a one-year contract as superintendent of the New Haven public schools, it was (as I said just a couple of months ago) the worst defeat for popular participation in education in many years. But now Mayor Guida has rammed through a three-year contract for Barbarito in a way that puts down, not just the citizens of New Haven, but also his own appointed Board of Education. As one result, the Board is now so split into two hostile factions that it has difficulty taking a strong stand on anything.

Thanks to the New Haven **Register,** there is no mystery about the Mayor's maneuver. At a private dinner of the Board, he insisted on an immediate vote on the contract (though the old contract does not expire until July 1). When there were only four votes in favor, instead of the requisite five, Mayor Guida made use of his prerogative of casting the deciding vote. And that is how--against the direct vote of three out of seven members of the Board--and without any discussion or consultation with the rest of the city--George Barbarito became our Superintendent of Schools until June 1977.

Premature

Perhaps the most startling aspect of this brutal procedure is that it was so completely unnecessary. There are still four months before the contract must be signed. And the Board holdouts were only asking for a meeting with Mr. Barbarito at which they wanted to learn some of his plans and attitudes for the next couple of years. Even if one or two of them were not entirely satisfied with his performance record or promises, it is more than likely that they would have voted for him if no alternative were offered in time (as there was not last year.)

But apparently the Mayor had his heart set on getting the contract signed early, before Board members--or, worse, community members--had time to come up with alternatives. A preliminary move was the removal from the Board of Education of its long-time member Orville Sweeting, who was gently put out to pasture (or on the library board, which may or may not amount to the same thing). In all probability his replacement, Ronald Noe, had to obligate himself to a yes vote on the contract in order to get the appointment (such promises have been exacted before this).

Unexpected Dissent

I am told that the three votes against the contract came as a surprise to Mayor Guida: he had expected to get six votes in favor without any difficulty. But as a politician, he had done his homework poorly if he really believed that either Ted Hogan or Phyllis Medvedow would not want to come to their own conclusions rather than blindly ratifying an unexpected demand.

From Barbarito's point of view, there is also a problem. I do not know how his mind works, but if I were in his shoes, I'd be furious. By his action, Mayor Guida has undermined Barbarito's stature, implying as he did that Barbarito would be unable to get the contract on his merits and that a burtal gesture was necessary to bring it about. If it were me, I'd quit; it doesn't look as if the though had crossed Barbarito's mind.

Bad Memories

In a very ugly way, the whole incident, tiny as it is, reminds me of Nixon and Watergate. Surely one of the most shocking aspects of those revelations last summer was our growing understanding that the Committee for the Reelection of the President was engaging in extreme and illegal measures to seize something--the election victory--which was theirs anyway, without effort and legally.

Unlike Watergate, however, comments on and questions about this action will remain entirely private and without consequences. It has been suggested that the vote was irregular, since Board members were not at the time in executive session, or were unaware of being in executive session (the matter hinges on whether the previous meeting had or had not been adjourned to a specific other date). But from the way people--including Board members--are talking, I do not get the impression that the vote will actually be challenged.

Make Your Own TV Shows

by Modern Times Staff

"The Studio right now is a nonthing, but we hope it will soon become really something," said Norman Cohn to a group of about ten—both men and women, black and white. They sat before him in a room on the second floor of 52 Crown St.

By the end of two hours, Norman Cohn had initiated these visitors into the not-so-mysterious mysteries of using a basic set of videotape equipment with a minimum of mechanical messing and technical terminology. From passive gawkers before the boob tube, they had become active participants in creating a television show starring themselves. Of course, the show simply consisted of an instant replay of views of themselves seated in their chairs, but they had actually adjusted the tape on the deck and aimed and focused the camera without assistance. Then it was really something to watch themselves on the viewer.

The Studio is an open place where many "somethings" can happen. Cohn, a former filmmaker who came to New Haven from Chicago in 1971, got together with Ted Clark and Ron Lucas to found the Studio in December of 1973. Their conception of the Studio was that it would be a "cooperative access facility open to the community at just enough cost to cover the rent and aimed at generating wider use of videotape and assisting videotape users."

Videotape Upsurge

Videotape recording used to be limited exclusively to the studios of broadcasting stations because of the size, weight and expense of the equipment involved. In 1968, however, the Sony Corp. of Japan (where else?) introduced a radical piece of technology—the portapack. The portapack offered the opportunity for video to move out of the commercial studios and into places like the Studio. The portapack is a self-contained video system consisting of a camera with built-in microphone and adjustable lens, a rechargeable battery pack, and a tape deck. All of this equipment is small and can be easily carried and maneuvered inside and out. The videotape deck operates with controls similar to those of the familiar audio tape recorder. A portapack costs approximately $1,800.

In the last year or two more and more social-service and educational institutions, and community groups have become interested in the use of videotape for a number of different purposes, including: making documentaries; presenting a program for fundraising or public relations; using it in psychotherapy or a classroom situation; and immediate feedback for training, supervision, or group activities. The Hill Video Cooperative, the New Haven Regional Center, the Child and Family Resource Program (Head Start), and various schools are among the groups and institutions that have already been in contact with Cohn's Cable Center to define their video needs and acquire equipment. The coming of cable television is greatly accelerating interest in videotape.

The Studio's Activities

The Studio's activities to service such institutions and groups fall into five general categories: information, distribution, editing, workshops and special events. Cohn, Clark and Lucas have transformed the bare space of the Studio into what potentially could be one of the most exciting community projects in New Haven. If you want more information about the Studio's activities or want to help out in its work, stop by on Tuesdays or call Norman Cohn at 562-9967 (Cable Center at ACES)' Doing is a lot more fun than just sitting and looking.

Future *Modern Times* articles will discuss the Videotape Resource Center, the use of video in education and psychology, the Cable Center, and the coming of cable television.

Boycott Non-UFW Grapes & Lettuce!

Eye On The Board

Board Gobbles Little Louis' Lunch

by Andy Esposito
Modern Times Staff

The most recent meeting of the Board of Aldermen, held on March 4th, resembled a three-ring circus with two ring masters. Action centered on two replies to Mayor Guida's State of the City Address, given last month, and on a debate over the future of Louis' Lunch.

In the right ring was Alderperson Rosalind Berman (R-29) hawking the Republican view of conditions in New Haven. The spotlight then moved left and focused upon Alderperson William Jones (D-22) who addressed the board on the "state of the Black community."

Interest Centered on Louis' Lunch

In the center ring was the event a majority of the spectators had come to see. Balanced precariously between survival and destruction was the 12 by 18 foot structure housing Louis' Lunch.

The spectators who sat waiting for the decision on Louis' were a type not often seen in the cramped, old Aldermanic chambers. Numbered among them were: Westville matrons in their Sunday dressup clothing; a representative from the New Haven Preservation Trust; and Kenneth Lassen, the tense present owner of Louis' Lunch.

While they were kept waiting for one hour and 15 minutes past the Board's usual eight PM starting time, one floor above a caucus of Democratic Alderpeople were sealing the fate of their cause.

That the 12 by 18 foot building would be torn down, the latest victim of New Haven's Mickey Mouse Redevelopment Agency, was obvious when a motion to table action on approving the sale of the building's site was tabled by a 14 to 13 vote. The sale of the land, located at Temple and George Streets, to a group of 60 physicians, was then approved by three votes (15 to 12.)

Human Aspects Cited

Leading the floor flight on behalf of Louis' was Frank Logue (D-18). Logue appears to have suddenly discovered that there is a human side to urban renewal. Yet, where was Logue's concern for the human aspects of renewal programs when his brother Edward, New Haven's first redevelopment Czar, was replacing "people places" with parking lots and road ways?

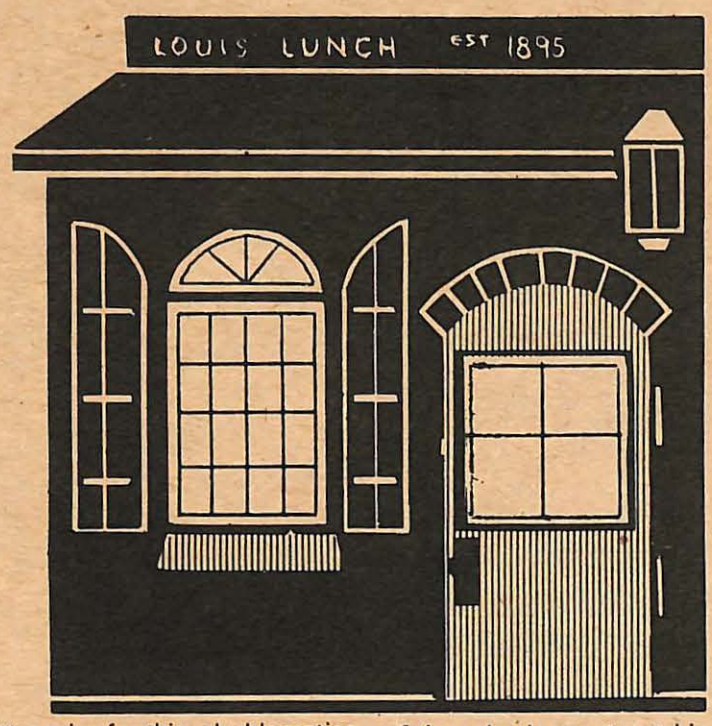
Let us hope Mr. Logue's new found concern for the human component of urban renewal is not just political tactics designed to enhance his image if or when he again supports the building of those proposed new Yale residential colleges.

Doctors get Bargain

The principal advocate for the proposed medical center, to be built on the Louis' Lunch site, was Joseph Carusone (D-14.) In presenting his case, Carusone stated that the doctors are prepared to buy the building site for $4 square foot. Since the Redevelopment Agency was asking $10 a square foot, why was this valuable property sold for the paltry price of $4 per square foot.

Who profited from this substantial decrease in price? Why didn't the city receive a better price for this valuable section of downtown real estate?

Scheduled For



Destruction

People Orientation Needed

One fact is clear from the debate over the future of Louis' Lunch. The redevelopment chieftains are still brick and mortar oriented.

They have never considered the human aspect of urban renewal. They have never hesitated to uproot families, the elderly, or any one else who gets in the way of their wrecking balls.

And judging from this latest example of the redevelopment cartel in action, they will never become people oriented. Thus, the residents of New Haven must demand that these administrators, who favor buildings, be replaced by ones who favor people.

If we don't bring about a change to an agency which is people oriented, New Haven will continue to become a vacant, sterile place. It could be a city where there are places for people to meet, to walk, to play and to learn. There is still time to make New Haven a "people city." However, that time grows short.

U.I. Customers Blow Their Fuses

by Gary Benenson

Over 500 irate UI customers turned out at West Haven High School auditorium recently to protest against soaring electric bills. The near-capacity crowd included young and old, black and white, men in suits and men in work clothes. A number of clergymen were present as well.

The meeting, which took place on Tuesday, February 26, was called by the Consumer Protest Committee, which has held similar meetings in North Haven and East Haven. The object of their protest is the so-called "Fuel Cost Adjustment," the UI Company's gimmick for raising electric bills without having to apply for a rate increase.

Most suburban residents with all-electric homes have been receiving monthly bills over $100, and in some cases over $200. But until now, the Public Utilities Commission, which is supposed to regulate utility rates, has done nothing about these outrageous charges.

"The Public Utilities Commission has acted more like a 'Public Be Damned' Commission than one which is supposed to protect the public," said Mrs. Eileen Hill, chairwoman of the Consumer Protest Committee. The audience agreed. Then they listened to Mrs. Hill describe how PUC chairman Howard Housman had defended the fuel cost adjustment, refused to meet with the Consumer Protest Committee, and even suggested that those who opposed the higher bills were "economic illiterates."

The next speaker got into trouble with the audience almost before he started. He was Thomas Goodrich, an administrative assistant to Governor Meskill. He began reading some Meskill proposals to expand the PUC and to commission an outside study of the utility companies' efficiency. Then the following exchanges took place:

QUESTION: Why does Meskill have to set up another Commission? Let UI figure out how to hold down its own costs. Why not get rid of the PUC members there and get some good ones? (APPLAUSE)

GOODRICH: Please let me finish reading these proposals. I really have to leave soon. (CONTINUES READING)

QUESTION: Why have the PUC? They give the utilities whatever they ask for. Why not eliminate it? Listen, when you want more taxes, you get them right away. Why does it take you months in the General Assembly to stop these rate increases?

GOODRICH: I'm on your side and so is the Governor. That's why he made these proposals....

A SPECTATOR COMMENT: The Governor's speech is very, very pretty, but it says absolutely nothing to the people.

After a few more questions and comments Goodrich had finally had enough and left.

The next speaker, Mr. Hennessey of the West Haven Housing Authority, described the plight of the elderly who are unable to afford higher electric bills. If electric bills continue to soar, the Housing Authority may have to board up its housing for the elderly.

Mr. Sumner Wills, a retired engineer, then took the podium. He spoke in shirtsleeves, explaining that he couldn't afford a jacket because of his electric bills. Mr. Wills described how the UI is actually profiting from the fuel shortage. He gave many examples of how the company could cut their costs if they wanted to.

The final speakers were several state representatives. Republican State Representative Antonetti began by recounting his own past voting record and attacking his Democratic opponent.

A clergyman in the crowd stood up and said, "You're too political. Stick to the subject." Someone else added, "What about Nixon?" Later, State Representative Donovan ran into similar trouble. A member of the audience interrupted his speech with, "Have you done anything for us?" A chorus of voices answered "No!!"

These two lawmakers must have been listening though. Later that same week, both Antonetti and Donovan demanded publicly that PUC chairman Housman resign and that the PUC handle the question of fuel adjustment coasts.

What further effect the Consumer Protest Committee will have is anybody's guess. Some members of the Committee are withholding the Fuel Adjustment part of their bill. Many more are planning to attend the State Legislative Committee hearings at West Haven High on March 11--a hearing which was demanded by the Consumer Protest Committee. But one thing is certain. UI customers are finally beginning to blow their fuses.

Nick Heyer

One of many participants speaking his mind at a recent rally called to protest increases in UI rates.

On The Job

Custodian for Sweeping Change

by Fran Paranto

My job is building maintenance from a sanitary viewpoint. Now I'm the head custodian and the only custodian at the Gold Street School. Before that I was at the Scranton School for a few years. Altogether I've been at it for 14 years.

It's the kids that make the job. Sanitary maintenance is the most important job in the whole place. Gold St. is a nice building but the church which owned it before just didn't keep it up. The city doesn't give a damn about these properties. It's a crime how dirty and goddamned dusty the building is.

The work is so repetitious. The same thing day in and day out and it's in such bad shape to begin with that it's hard to see the difference. There's only me at the place and it really needs two people, or at least another guy part time. I'm really surprised I haven't hurt myself yet with some of the lifting they expect me to do. When I really need them some of the other guys will stop down from the other schools and give me a hand because they're all working guys and know we have to help each other. The kids are great too. Out of the two-hundred kids there I don't think there's one I couldn't ask for a hand.

That's the thing that gets me about this job. I love working with children, especially poor or ghetto children because they need so much love and affection.

Respect for Property

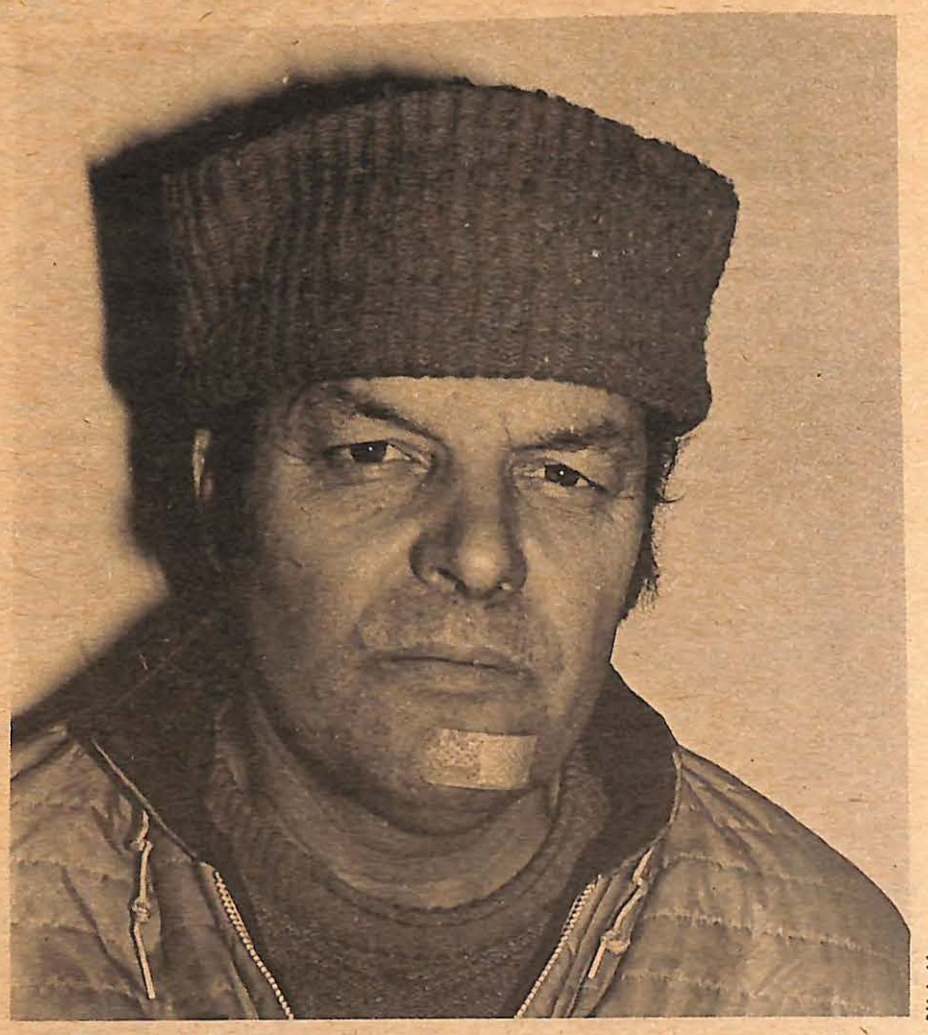
Over at Gold St. things really work well. Some of the teachers have an open classroom philosophy that the kids really love. It's a beautifly thing. You can tell how well things work because there is just no vandalism in the school. And that's real unusual. Even though the place has been broken into three or four times, they don't destroy the property. It's a real warm place.

What bothers me is that I see things in the school system that affects black people or poor people. It crushes me, really crushes me to see these poor black kids come into school with ripped coats and shoes in the winter. What kills me is that it's so unnecessary in this country with all the wealth. Living in this country you don't get a goddamned fair shake and the kids know this.

I used to be police custodian at Hillhouse and the kids were destroying the school. I took the job because I needed the money. That 15 cents got you a glass of beer and your head caved in. My black awareness wasn't as great then. I was trying to do my job. Now I feel ashamed of myself looking back. That was around the time my head started to go through some changes.

There are only about 8 white kids over at Gold St. School now, but the place is so warm and nice that things are OK for them. It would be amazing if we had as many as three fights between anybody over there in the whole school year. There are some really good teachers.

I try to deal with kids on a human basis, not just as a custodian. The kids see that. They see that people there are breaking their backs for them and they respond. They keep the lavatory clean and they don't write on walls. These kids even come up to me and ask if they can help. It hasn't happened like this before. A lot of kids call me Baldy but I know they don't mean anything bad by it and when it bugs me I know it's because I'm already feeling bad. Right now I can honestly say I don't have a problem with any kid in that school. When they see me on the street, they wave. It really makes me feel good.



Nick Heyer

Fran Paranto, custodian at the Gold Street School. "I try to deal with kids on a human basis, not just as a custodian."

WOMEN'S DAY

continued from page 5

Lavender Brush (typesetting and painting collective), local daycare co-ops, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and others. The New Haven Women's Center had a booth, as did some ot its project groups, such as Women Vs. Connecticut, and the Rape Crisis Counseling Project. Workshops concerned with therapy, poetry writing, health, body fitness, theater, consciousness raising, children, and music continued through the day.

The weekend was an active demonstration of women working artistically and politically. Hopefully, the celebration of International Women's Day will become a New Haven tradition, giving women, past and present the recognition they deserve.

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Solzhenitsyn

continued from page 4

General Vlasov, deserted and fought for the Nazis is an indication of the alienation of the Soviet people as a *whole from socialism. The simpleminded*ness of this view is frightening. There are turncoats in every war, though few are as savage butchers of their own people as Vlasov and his anti-Semitic troops were. How, too, does Solzhenitsyn explain such facts as that on the Stalingrad front during the worst part of the Nazi offensive more than 14,000 officers and men of the Red Army applied to join the Communist Party?

Solzhenitsyn's whole attitude toward the World War II period is so bizaare that, if it had been charged before publication of the excerpts that he had said what he in fact did say, his supporters would undoubtedly indignantly have denied the charges. Citizens and officials of the Soviet Union, which lost 20 million dead (out of 200 million population) to the Nazis and their collaborators might understandably find his views worse than simpleminded and worse than bizaare.

Pound, Hamsun, Solzyhenitsyn

But what of the crimes of the Stalin era? Though he is closer to reality in his treatment of this sad subject, even here Solzhenitsyn's method prevents him from doing justice to it. His attitude that no one should ever have been jailed for opposition--no matter of what kind or degree or in what context--obscures any meaningful discussion of the ways in which Stalin's violations of the norms of socialist legality caused loyal and innocent citizens to suffer. Solzhenitsyn's insistence on dealing only with negative phenomena, such as repression, during the period of socialist construction and with none of the positive achievements--the stunning advances in health, education, housing, and general economic and social development--of that period, achievements that gave new life to many more people than Stalin killed, blocks any attempt to disentangle the tragic complexities of history with their intermixture of good and evil.

In those points where Solzhenitsyn is accurate, he is, rather than making new revelations, simply rehashing Nikita Khrushchev's famous two-day speech, "The Crimes of the Stalin Era," made to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

What then is the place of Solzhenitsyn in history? Is it as high as he himself claims it is? His personal bravery is not particularly relevant in answering this question. Reactionaries as well as progressives can be brave. What is important is what they are being brave about, their world views. Solzhenitsyn's world view was summarized by *The New York Times* in the following way: "Reading between the lines, one senses his longing for a benevolent autocracy (a noble czar?) who lets society be guided by 'those who can direct its activities intelligently'--technocrats and scientists. But the foundation of morality and social value for him is Christianity embodied, until now at least, in a very Russian Orthodox Church." Appealing? Or appalling?

In historical context, Solzhenitsyn is perhaps best seen as a belated joiner of a group that includes Ezra Pound and Knut Hamsun. Pound, the century's greatest poet in English, and Nobel Prize winner Hamsun, next to Ibsen, Norway's greatest writer, both saw themselves as humanists and moralists, but both became fascist supporters. Their arrests after World War II stirred up thorny questions about the relationship of the writer to the state. The issues were resolved, to no one's satisfaction, through controversial compromises. Treason charges against Hamsun were dropped on grounds of "senility," though he was fined $85,000. Treason charges against Pound were dropped on grounds of "insanity", though he was incarcerated in a mental hospital for 13 years. The great (because of his earlier novels) Russian writer's exile to Switzerland and $6 million in royalties rather than to death in Siberia seems an analogous conclusion.

The Open Line article goes on to attack Leonid Brezhnev for his detente meetings with Nixon but rather than refute this kind of attack, it is perhaps best to close with a simple expression of hope that the cause of world peace be taken to heart by American critics of the Soviet Union as much as they take to heart the cause of Solzhenitsyn.